AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

Claim 1. (Currently Amended)

An access panel assembly for use with a duct for providing access to ~~a~~ the duct through an opening ~~in the~~ on an outer surface of the duct, said access panel assembly comprising:

a sealing member adapted to fit around the opening in the duct;

a cover member adapted to fit over said sealing member and cover the opening in the duct;

a plurality of fasteners for coupling said cover member to the duct;

said cover member being formed to the shape of the outer surface of the duct;

said fasteners comprising a spring clip and a threaded stud member, said spring clips being affixed around the edge of the opening in the duct and including a threaded portion for engaging said threaded stud members, and said cover member including mounting openings for inserting said threaded stud members to engage said spring clips, and said sealing member including mounting openings in communication with the mounting openings in said cover member;

wherein the outer surface of the duct comprises a plurality of side-walls which define a cross-sectional shape for the duct, and said cover member is formed to span ~~at least~~ more than one of said side-walls.

Claim 2. (Previously Presented)

The access panel assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cover member comprises a fire resistant panel and said sealing member comprises a gasket formed from a high temperature resistant material, so that in a closed position said cover member and said sealing member provide a fire tight seal over the opening in the duct.

Claim 3. (Cancelled)

Claim 4. (Previously Presented)

The access panel assembly as claimed in claim 1 or 2 wherein said threaded stud members include a tool-less head for screwing and unscrewing said threaded stud member.

Claim 5. (Previously Presented)

The access panel assembly as claimed in claim 4, wherein said threaded stud member comprises a wing head threaded stud.

Claim 6. (Previously Presented)

The access panel assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the opening in the duct has an irregular shape, and said cover member has a shape to conform with the irregular shape of the opening in the duct.

Claim 7. (Cancelled)

Claim 8. (Cancelled)

Claim 9. (Currently Amended)

The access panel assembly as claimed in claim 6, wherein the duct comprises a single curved side-wall and said single curved side-wall defines a circular or elliptical cross-sectional shape ~~of~~ for the duct, and said cover member is formed to span a section of said curved side-wall ~~includes any one of a rectangle, a circle, a square, and an oval~~.

Claim 10. (Currently Amended)

A frameless access panel for use with a duct for providing access to ~~a~~ the duct through an opening ~~in the~~ on an outer surface of the duct, the outer surface of the duct including a plurality of side-walls, said access panel comprising:

a sealing member adapted to fit around the opening in the duct;

a cover member ~~panel~~ adapted to fit over said sealing member and cover the opening in the duct;

a plurality of fasteners for coupling said cover member to the duct;

said cover member ~~panel~~ being formed to the shape of the outer surface of the duct;

said fasteners comprising a spring clip and a threaded stud member, said spring clips being affixed around the edge of the opening in the duct and including a threaded portion for engaging said threaded stud members, and said cover member including mounting openings for inserting said threaded stud members to engage said spring clips, and said sealing member

including mounting openings in communication with the mounting openings in said cover member;

~~wherein the outer surface of the duct comprises a plurality of side-walls which define a cross-sectional shape for the duct, and~~ said cover member ~~is~~ being formed to span ~~at least~~ more than one of said side-walls.

Claim 11. (Cancelled)

Claim 12. (Cancelled)

Claim 13. (Cancelled)

Claim 14. (Previously Presented)

The frameless access panel as claimed in claim 10, wherein said spring clips comprise a low profile shape, so that said spring clips do not substantially protrude into the interior of the duct.

Claim 15. (Cancelled)

Claim 16. (Previously Presented)

The access panel assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein said cover member comprises a metal sheet.

Claim 17. (Cancelled)

Claim 18. (Cancelled)

Claim 19. (Withdrawn)

A method for installing in the field an access panel for providing access to a duct, said method comprising the steps of:

cutting an opening in the duct, said opening having a size sufficient to provide the required access to the duct;

forming mounting holes around the perimeter of said opening;

attaching clip fasteners to the duct around said opening, each of said clip fasteners being in communication with one of said mounting holes;

placing a sealing member around said opening, said sealing member having holes in communication with said mounting holes;

placing a cover member over said sealing member to cover said opening and affixing said cover member to the duct using fasteners mounted in said mounting holes and coupling to said clip fasteners.

Claim 20. (Withdrawn)

The method as claimed in claim 19, further including the step of shaping the cover member to conform to the shape of the duct.

Claim 21. (Withdrawn)

The method as claimed in claim 20, further including the step of cutting one or more edges of the cover member.

Claim 22. (Previously Presented)

The access panel assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the access panel is frameless.

Claim 23. (Previously Presented)

The access panel assembly as claimed in claim 1, wherein the access panel is field modifiable.

Claim 24. (Previously Presented)

The frameless access panel as claimed in claim 10, wherein said cover member comprises a metal sheet.

Claim 25. (Previously Presented)

The frameless access panel as claimed in claim 10, wherein the access panel is field modifiable.